



Science and Technology
Committee

Jonathan Reynolds MP
Secretary of State
Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade

By email only

15 September 2026

Subject: Science diplomacy: Government response

Dear Jonny,

Thank you for your department's response to my committee's report *Science diplomacy: sovereignty, strategy and the global race*.

We will spend some time studying the response in detail. However, it is immediately apparent that parts of the response did not fully address the recommendations set out in the report. Specifically, in response to my committee's recommendation that the government should set out how it intends to protect its sovereignty in critical technologies, including AI, the response agreed that this was necessary and stated that ministers have "set out the UK's approach to AI sovereignty in public statements". Those statements were considered by the committee during the inquiry and formed part of the evidence base which led the committee to conclude that the government's overall approach lacked sufficient clarity and strategic coherence.

The committee also recommended that the government adopt and communicate a clear and consistent definition of sovereignty. While the response referred to a number of ministerial statements, it did not itself provide such a definition. At a time when issues around AI sovereignty are constantly being raised, the need to draw together passages from multiple statements to understand the government's position reinforces the committee's concern that greater clarity and consistency are required.

I would be grateful if you could provide an additional response to the recommendation in paragraph 62 of the report by 29 September. I intend to place this letter, and your response, in the public domain.



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With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Chi Onwurah".

Dame Chi Onwurah MP

Chair – Science and Technology Committee